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ABSTRACT

This paper provides information on a substance abuse prevention effort called the Commonwealth Alliance for Drug Rehabilitation and Education (CADRE). After a discussion of the origins of CADRE, five steps taken by CADRE in its substance abuse prevention efforts are described, beginning with organizational establishment. The identification and involvement of key leaders are explored in terms of diversity of leadership, meaningful roles, bylaws, and standard operating procedures. Next, avenues for increasing formal community awareness are described: (1) the PRIDE National Survey; (2) videos and local cablevision; (3) newsletters and print media; (4) outside resource personnel; (5) established civic groups and organizations; and (6) the regional conference and annual meeting. After a description of momentum building activities, a section on evaluation describes the use of surveys and self-evaluation and the establishment of annual goals. Last, information on project staffing and management, program initiation and community involvement activities, problems created by regional collaboration, and success measurement is provided. (CLA)

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AASA PRESENTATION
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA
MARCH 2, 1991

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REGIONAL COLLABORATION TO COMBAT SUBSTANCE ABUSE: A Local Success Story

James E. Upperman

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AASA PRESENTATION
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA
MARCH 2, 1991

I'm James E. Upperman, Division Superintendent of the Manassas (Virginia) City Public Schools ... For the past twenty years, I have been directly involved in community and school efforts to work with substance abuse prevention efforts.

During the past four years, I have been involved with a unique substance abuse prevention effort called CADRE - Commonwealth Alliance for Drug Rehabilitation and Education.

This "Commonwealth Alliance" was the brainchild of Virginia Attorney General Mary Sue Terry, whose efforts to promote collaboration among the private and public sectors have received national attention. Local CADRES, located throughout the state, are now in existence in most Virginia localities.

This afternoon, I would like to share with you what we have done in our community in our efforts to combat substance abuse. It is my hope that you will be able to utilize some of the ideas, and processes, that we discuss in the next ninety minutes when you return to your schools and communities.

One of the significant components of this program that distinguishes it from others is regional collaboration ... three political jurisdictions working together, combining resources, planning and implementing programs.

Any discussion of the origins of this program must focus on this regional cooperative effort. In Summer 1987, a meeting was called by the Division Superintendent of the Prince William County Public Schools for the purpose of addressing substance abuse prevention in the greater Manassas-Prince William Area. Among those invited were School Superintendents, Law Enforcement Officers, Social Service Personnel,

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local Government Officials (appointed and elected) etc .... these invitees were representatives from the City of Manassas, Prince William County and the City of Manassas Park.

The meeting four years ago was particularly significant because of the media attention it received. The public's agenda, long one of violence and substance abuse related crime, was now focused on a regional committee which demonstrated a commitment to substance abuse prevention. Governing bodies (city councils and county board of supervisors) became involved in the effort through formal actions as reflected in their local meeting minutes. ORGANIZATIONAL ESTABLISHMENT IS STEP #1 IN THIS PROCESS. The establishment of any organization is dependent on purpose and commitment, and most often includes an invitation to become involved. All of these ingredients were present in our formal beginnings.

Step 2 in our process is known as IDENTIFICATION AND INVOLVEMENT OF KEY LEADERS. As suggested by the title, it is essential that the organizing group broaden its scope of leadership by quickly identifying key resource personnel in the community, and soliciting their involvement. An essential component in this process is the utilization of these key leaders in significant committee work and organizational planning. Bringing these leaders "into the fold" in the early stages of the process is extremely important. Making all the decisions up front, then asking leaders to buy into the process later, is usually ineffective. Leaders will have a need to lead, and should be given the opportunity to do so. However, the organizing group should have developed certain guidelines and significant statements of purpose in order to encourage leaders to become involved.

Several significant issues to be considered in Step #2 are as follows:

1. Diversity of Leadership--attempt to involve a variety of persons. Government officials, retired persons, young and old, rich and poor can all be identified. Political leaders may be the easiest to identify....but silent leaders and other respected individuals should be involved (PTA officers), booster club officials, local shop owners, etc.)

2. Involvement in Meaningful Roles--do not encourage involvement in your group, and then fail to involve these busy people in meaningful roles. One of the most common problems to confront an emerging organization is to have successful, energetic members without a cause, without a meaningful direction. Involve these individuals at the onset, or do not expect them to remain involved .... successful leaders are busy people who will not want to have their time wasted.

3. Bylaws and Standard Operating Procedures - it is most often helpful at this stage of development to prepare a bylaws document to further formalize the organization. This document will become a necessity for groups desiring to obtain "tax exempt status."

Step #3 in our process is identified as FORMAL COMMUNITY AWARENESS. From the beginnings in 1987 to our current phase of development, we have eliminated "denial" and stated the problem in a formal fashion ... our mayors, our school superintendents, our social service personnel, our police department heads have all shared with the transmittal of this message -- WE HAVE A PROBLEM!

There are various ways in which to emphasize and deliver the stated message. Let's take a look at several ways in which we have taken our message to our community.

#1 - USE OF THE SURVEY -- "We have a problem" is important, but superficial..... formal endorsement of a survey instrument may eventually verify the problem, and will provide a continuous cycle and means for keeping the issue in the public eye.

There are several superior instruments available for consideration. All three jurisdictions agreed to utilize the PRIDE National Survey, which has been administered in both the City of Manassas and in Manassas Park. Prince William County is planning to utilize this instrument in the near future.

Don't under estimate the importance of utilizing this type of survey. Employees who assist in administering it, students and community who complete the survey, and parents/teachers who review and analyze results will all become more involved in your efforts when "hard data" replaces the "We have a problem" statement. Unfortunately, there are still many jurisdictions that refuse to administer such a document, including a few in the greater Metropolitan Washington, D.C. area; ..... which is difficult to imagine in an area which is unfortunately as well known for its drugs and violence as it is for its political leadership, or lack of same.

#2 - USE OF VIDEOS, LOCAL CABLEVISION, ETC.

For the next fifteen minutes, we will take a look at a production developed cooperatively by the City of Manassas Public Schools, and our local cablevision outlet.

In brief introduction, the video you are about to see has been recently completed in our school division. It is one in a series of similar efforts to reinforce this issue in a broad-based non-accusatory manner. While "From a Distance" was not one of our original productions, it will give you an idea as to how we state the issue utilizing local cablevision services:

VIDEO HERE

"FROM A DISTANCE VIDEO"

Discussion--what do you think the purpose was? Did the video serve its intended purpose? Allow me to make a few comments about how we utilize this film. I host a quarterly TV program entitled, "The Quarterly Report to the Public." This program airs on our local cable network weekly--8:00 p.m. every Thursday evening. The personnel in our local cablevision office assist us with the technical expertise in preparing each report. We write the script, provide the "actors" and "actresses", and they do the rest! Each of these quarterly reports has a different focus ... budget, instructional, and substance abuse issues have been included in these programs.

#3 - USE OF NEWSLETTERS AND PRINT MEDIA

Once we determined that our issue was important enough to discuss formally, we recognized the need for the development of a substance abuse prevention newsletter. While not a fancy, printed publication, this newsletter has assisted us in our efforts to spread the word in our community.

#4 - USE OF OUTSIDE RESOURCE PERSONNEL

Early in the process of Community Awareness, we identified key speakers and resources nationwide, some of which we extended into our community to advise and serve our efforts. Even with a limited fiscal base, we analyzed all resources and selected one or two key personnel who could assist us in "getting the message out". Funding was obtained in numerous ways, to be addressed later in this presentation.

#5 - USE OF ESTABLISHED CIVIC GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Many of our committee members became involved in the selling of our purpose and organization to community and civic groups. Local

Lions, Kiwanis, Rotary, PTA etc. were visited and addressed by club members. While financial support was not the original purpose, it became a natural bi-product of these visits. Remember that many clubs operate based on annual goals and submit these goals and an analysis of their accomplishment to nationally affiliated controlling organizations. These goals are likely to address community needs, and therefore could be supportive of your substance abuse prevention efforts. You will not need to sell this program if done correctly .... it will sell itself to civic clubs who witness and read of substance abuse, violence, crime, lack of productivity, school dropouts, and other similar community concerns.

#6 - REGIONAL CONFERENCE - ANNUAL MEETING

Regional Conference development has played a major role in the continuing evolution of our organization. It is most obvious that a "coming together" of our community to focus on one or more of our organization's goals and the substance abuse issue would be most positive. Under the auspices of a conference coordinating committee, we have conducted three annual conferences, inviting more than 400 participants annually to participate in a variety of weekend activities, including the following:

1) Choice of workshops presented by local and statewide resource personnel
2) Sit-down banquet with guest speaker
3) Breakfast action-plan meeting
4) Evaluation session at end of conference on 2nd day

By all standards, the Regional CADRE Conference has played a major role in the dissemination and sharing of information in our community.

The 4th Step in our process is known as MOMENTUM BUILDING ACTIVITIES. In this phase, the original enthusiasm for the project is encouraged and broadened in the months following program inception. There are several issues to consider in this phase of development:

1. Plan regular, meaningful meetings for your groups' steering committee. Ask committee members for input as to programs, and encourage ideas which will make them more effective. Keep meetings short, no longer than 90 minutes. Conduct meetings at a time when students, parents, businessmen, politicians, etc. can attend. Involve the press in your meetings.

2. Utilize creative approaches and unique activities. While many activities can be modeled after the success of others, do not hesitate to encourage creative thinking and unique programs.

   As an example, allow me to share with you a story as to how we came upon a creative, unique opportunity for our regional CADRE.

Shortly after our regional group was invited to organize, a professor at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia called a meeting of Northern Virginia Substance Abuse contact personnel to discuss with him a substance abuse grant proposal he had written. Entitled, TEAM: Teaching Effective Abuse Management, this grant was available to community and school personnel throughout Northern Virginia. Dr. Dave Anderson, grant originator, requested at his introductory meeting that one school division volunteer to pilot his proposal, which involved a training seminar utilizing an outdoor

education center in Fairfax County, Virginia. This center includes an obstacle course with physically challenging opportunities designed as learning stations. The 75 acre park, owned and operated by George Mason University, is located conveniently for most northern Virginia school districts.

The City of Manassas Public Schools enthusiastically volunteered to be the first school division to endorse the grant and use this outdoor education learning course. Remembering our first call for employees and community and striving to attract enough persons to justify our involvement, we began our first weekend with 32 volunteers (40 slots were available to use).

Our next five weekend outings were filled to capacity, and all future endeavors have been successfully completed. We have now extended this activity to regional CADRE involvement, and many groups now visit this park to engage in seminars and workshops.

Let's take a look at Hemlock Park and the outdoor education experience.

SHOW VIDEO HERE

3. Use of Subcommittees - it is during phase #4 that the use of subcommittees becomes more and more significant. If properly planned, a variety of such committees can provide for vital renewal of early organizational activities. One essential subcommittee, among many, is fund raising.

Our regional CADRE approached the fund raising issue from a variety of perspectives. We have been very fortunate in obtaining the volunteer services of a most influential local bank president, and respected community servant, in chairing this committee. His support was instrumental in funding our organization's primary objectives.

Without his effort, our organization would not have experienced significant success in our community.

Fundraising has not included traditional door-to-door campaigns. A local radio disc jockey volunteered his services by sponsoring and "plugging via the airwaves" a chili cookoff, and a series of faculty - deejay basketball games at local schools. All proceeds were donated to CADRE.

In addition, the local deejay became a member of the steering committee and began exerting his influence in support of our cause. He formed an organization, with CADRE 's endorsement, known as DAD, Discjockeys Against Drugs . . . which has attracted statewide attention.

In addition, the steering committee prepared a federal grant application for OSAP funding for conference development. While the first proposal was not accepted, the committee has analyzed and improved a second package for submittal this Spring in hopes of obtaining federal funding for CADRE's Annual Conference, which is conducted for less than $15,000 annually.

Other conference committees have included bylaws and standards, newsletter development, and prevention activities. Your organization will design committees based on your unique needs and opportunities.

The fifth and final phase of development involves the EVALUATION COMPONENT.

This essential phase of the operation includes several areas:

1) Survey use - survey general parents, students and community. Evaluate responses every three years - important. Establish trends concerning areas of strength and areas of weakness, and prepare new programs based on needs.
2) Self Evaluation - one of the areas in which we have been most

involved is that of self evaluation.

3) Establishment of Annual Goals - the organization's annual goals are focused on its personal needs assessment and previous evaluation. Which areas are ongoing?, which require new direction?, which have been completed?
This process must include a frank, accurate assessment of previous programs and services.

In summary, the five steps in developing such a community model are as follows:

1) ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT
2) IDENTIFICATION AND INVOLVEMENT OF KEY LEADERS
3) COMMUNITY AWARENESS
4) MOMENTUM BUILDING ACTIVITIES
5) EVALUATION

Let's turn our attention to several issues or practical questions which must be addressed before a commitment is made to a program of this nature (Regional CADRE)

ISSUE #1 - How is this project staffed and managed?

Our regional CADRE Steering Committee consists of approximately 40 volunteers from all segments of the three jurisdictions that make up the greater Prince William Region. The 40 member committee elects four officers who comprise the Executive Committee for the CADRE, and whose duties are limited and well defined by the Bylaws of the organization.

All services are provided by volunteers .... However the formal support of the three local governing bodies is essential in that it not only recognizes the organization as a separate entity but authorizes

governmental employees to use minimal government time to perform essential CADRE tasks. (not at the expense of the job description held by each employee)

ISSUE #2 - How does one kickoff such a project?

There are two types of kickoffs in this program. The first is program initiation and only requires that one, or two, individuals assess the need and demonstrate the commitment to act. Such a commitment is usually enacted through an "invitation to attend " an organizational meeting, as addressed in the first phase of our project implementation.

The second kickoff which our group considered to be essential was a call to the community to become involved in CADRE activities. The lack of name recognition and confusion as to what CADRE is, and what it does has been addressed in this manner. Our group sponsored an informative "How to Raise a Drug Free Child" tape at the City Hall, which unfortunately was poorly attended. Although we were disappointed, we were challenged to use the tape in other ways. We went to individual community organizations and schools and shared the presentation you are about to see. We also began the showing of this informative tape on Cable television, and personalized it to address some of our Manassas-Prince William issues.

VIDEO HERE

HOW TO RAISE A DRUG FREE CHILD

This kickoff activity proved to be very successful as it was extended to local organizations in a planned, systematic manner.

Although CADRE is yet to become a household word in our community, it is reaching out and positively touching more segments of our community.

The "How to Raise a Drug Free Child" tape was the focal point for our initial community contacts.

ISSUE #3 - What problems are created by regional collaboration?

More opportunities than problems are created when regional collaboration occurs. However, you should prepare yourself for setbacks in some instances.

Define our circumstance - Manassas City - 5,000 school students, small city - six member city council-governing body.

Prince William County - 40,000 school students, large suburban county - seven member board of supervisors-governing body.

Manassas Park - 1,200 school students, very small city - five member city council-governing body.

Historically, the three jurisdictions had demonstrated little desire to interact ... as a matter of record, the two cities "broke away" from the original governing body for the entire area (Prince William County) between 1975-76. The purpose of this break was to provide better services for each city's residents.

For nearly a decade, not many regional programs were in evidence. However, this governmental separation into three jurisdictions failed to establish boundaries for problems. If alcohol abuse was a problem in one area, it was obviously a problem in another; the same with controlled substance abuse, etc. Police records verified crime related to drugs and alcohol. Social services the same. The issues and problems extended over and through boundaries.

Our CADRE does not establish school programs ... each jurisdiction has its own School Board. However, CADRE does provide networking opportunities to discuss and share successes. While one school district may fail to implement a program used in another, it will certainly be aware of the options available in the other two divisions.

One example of the positive results of collaboration is as follows: The large division (Prince William County) has a student assistance program for substance abuse policy offending students. Those students are encouraged to enroll in a week long extensive program designed to help identify the extent to which they have a problem, and the manner in which they can deal with it. The two small school divisions are unable to fund a separate, distinct program for its relatively few offenders.

However, CADRE endorsed the Prince William County program and encouraged the two smaller districts to request participation with the large division, which they have. Now, the SAP is available to all three CADRE school districts. Students who might otherwise be automatically suspended from school, or perhaps even expelled as a result of their offenses, would be able to participate in a regional program which would attempt to return them to school with a better understanding of what they have done, and how they can prevent it from happening again.

There are instances in which the three jurisdictions disagree, and at those times CADRE restates its mission statement and purposes. CADRE has no authority to make programs or services happen in local school divisions. Its' networking and idea exchange sessions have been most valuable in promoting cooperation and discussion concerning the ways in which we serve our communities. New programs have resulted due

to exposure of a variety of publics at CADRE conferences, meetings and seminars.

Another area of particular sensitivity deals with the steering committee makeup ... every attempt should be made to involve individuals from all three jurisdictions, and encourage representation of the three local governing bodies. VERY IMPORTANT!

ISSUE #4 - SUCCESS: HOW IS IT MEASURED?

One of the greatest challenges and frustrations for those implementing substance abuse prevention programs is the issue relating to success measurement.

If the determination of success is based on a decline in the use of illegal substances by school aged youth . . . . . .

We aren't sure if we are making progress, but we have data establishing a baseline. (for comparison in future years)

If the determination of success is based on the numbers of persons, young and old, who are regularly meeting and discussing this issue, planning and sharing programs and ideas . . . . . .

We are successful!!! .....

The regional CADRE has significantly increased community awareness and interaction - data available to confirm.

If the determination of success is based on a decline in the numbers of school aged youth who are suspended and expelled from school due to substance abuse related offenses . . . . . .

We are successful!!!

The regional CADRE has worked cooperatively with the local school divisions to design programs and policies, and to share resources. Fewer students are being suspended and expelled from schools - data available to confirm.

If the determination of success is based on a reduction in crime and violence in our community which is related to substance abuse offenses . . . . . .

We aren't sure if we are making progress, but we have data establishing a baseline (for comparison in future years)

If the determination of success is based on an increase in the regional sharing of resources . . . . . .

We are successful!!! The Regional CADRE's efforts have resulted in a marked increase in the number of cooperative programs being shared by our three jurisdictions - data available to confirm.

If the determination of success is based on recognition received from state authorities . . . . . .

We are successful!!! The state CADRE recognized the Prince William Area Regional CADRE at its second annual conference in April 1989 for outstanding achievement as a result of developing a Community Awareness Conference for three jurisdictions.

In addition, Prince William Area Regional CADRE

officers and members have been invited to address numerous organizations to share information concerning this concept.

If the determination of success if based on a community's renewal, with a focus on freeing itself from substances of abuse and resulting problems . . . . . .

We are making progress ..... Greater numbers of students, parents, businessmen, and others are involved in this effort. There is a long struggle ahead, but the segment of our population exposed to CADRE activities is increasing .. and the number coming "on board" to actively participate is higher than ever before.

If the mountain is high, and it is, and the trip is long .... one man alone may not be able to reach the destination. Two men together, or even more, increase the likelihood that someone will see the finish line. The struggle in our communities is not unlike the fourteen foot wall at Hemlock Park --- it is an obstacle that one man alone can not overcome. However, add a few individuals with the will to meet the challenge, and the wall/barrier becomes less formidable. We can make a difference.